

had better be regarded,—that they should bring together the material which is still necessary to enable them to come to a final judgment upon about ten still uncertain forms,—and that they should subject any exotic immigrants to be added to the fauna to a strict criticism.

On these points it appears to me that a concordant judgment may be arrived at.

XXXI.—*Recent Ornithological Publications**.

1. ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS.

SIR JOHN RICHARDSON'S volume on the Polar Regions† contains a notice of the birds met with in Spitzbergen (p. 210), and a short chapter devoted to the Zoology of the Arctic Circle generally. "Excluding merely the points where the woods cross the Arctic Circle," says the author, p. 278, "the polar region presents a uniformity in its native birds in all meridians. All the birds that frequent the high latitudes are natives, and, though their stay at the breeding-places does not exceed three months, they are to be considered as merely visitors in the southern regions, which they traverse in going and coming during the remaining nine months of the year." This, we believe, is pretty nearly true, as far as it goes; but a really good and succinct account of Arctic Zoology is still a desideratum, and would form a very acceptable addition to our knowledge of geographical distribution.

We do not propose here to enter into the general merits of Mr. Du Chaillu's account of his travels in Equatorial Africa‡. That his work has produced much hostile criticism our readers are well aware. But no ornithologist, who is acquainted with the progress of his favourite science during the past few years,

* Want of space has compelled us to defer the notice of several works until the next Number.—ED.

† The Polar Regions. By Sir John Richardson. Edinburgh, 1861, 1 vol. 8vo.

‡ Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa. By Paul B. Du Chaillu. London, 1861.

can be ignorant that Mr. Du Chaillu has discovered some remarkable novelties in the order of Birds, whatever he may have done in Mammals. In this branch of his investigations, however, he has had the advantage of the services of Mr. John Cassin, the well-known Ornithologist of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, who has thoroughly worked at his specimens, and has been able to discriminate between what was really new, and what were merely more perfect examples of already named species. Mr. Du Chaillu's narrative contains several notices concerning some of the more important species which he discovered, to which we must call our readers' attention.

The new Guinea-fowl (*Numida plumifera**) "is very shy, but marches in large flocks through the woods, where the traveller hears its loud voice. It utters a kind of 'quack,' hoarse and discordant, like the voices of other Guinea-fowls. It avoids the path left by travellers; but its own tracks are met everywhere in the woods it frequents, as the flock *scratch* and tear up the ground wherever they stop. It is strong of wing, and sleeps by night on the tops of high trees, a flock generally roosting together on the same tree. When surprised by the hunter they do not fly in a body, but scatter in every direction. Thus it is a difficult bird to get, and the natives do not often get a shot at it."

Of the *Phasidus niger*, remarkable as being the nearest approach in the Æthiopian fauna to anything like a true *Gallus* or *Phasianus*, Mr. Du Chaillu tells us that when he met with it for the first time in the woods, he thought he saw before him a domestic fowl. "The natives have noticed the resemblance too, as their name for it shows—*couba iga*, signifying wild-fowl. *Wild* they are, and most difficult to approach; and also rare even in the forests where they are at home. They are not found at all on the sea-coast, and do not appear until the traveller reaches the

* For a good figure of this species and the *Phasidus niger*, see 'Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia,' new series, vol. iv. pls. 2 & 3. In the same work (pl. 49) are also representations of two beautiful *Meropidæ* discovered by Mr. Du Chaillu, *Meropogon breweri* and *Meropiscus mülleri*; and in the following plate are figured some very remarkable species of *Muscicapidæ*.

range of fifty or sixty miles from the coast. Even there they are so rare that, though I looked out for them constantly, I killed but three in all my expeditions. They are not gregarious, like the Guinea-fowl, but wander through the woods—a male, and one, or, at most, two females in company. They are very watchful, and fly off to retreats in the woods at the slightest alarm.”

Another remarkable type, for the discovery of which we are indebted to Mr. Du Chaillu’s exertions, is the *Alethe castanea*, belonging to the Ant-eating series of the Old World, which embraces *Ixos* and its allies. Of this bird we find the following notice, p. 273:—

“Hunting in the rear of the village, on the 15th, I shot a curious bird, the *Alethe castanea*, a new species. It is said by the natives to have a devil in it—for what reason I could not discover; probably for none. But its habits make it singular. They fly in a small flock, and follow industriously the Bashikouay ants in their marches about the country. The bird is insectivorous; and when the Bashikouay army routs before it the frightened grasshoppers and beetles, the bird, like a regular camp-follower, pounces on the prey, and carries it off. I think it does not eat the Bashikouay.”

Mr. Du Chaillu likewise confirms (p. 131) what Dr. Hartlaub has previously reported, on the authority of Pel, as to the habits of *Gypohierax angolensis*, that they are those of the Fishing-Eagles (*Haliaëtus*).

2. FRENCH PUBLICATIONS.

We have seen the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th numbers of MM. Jaubert and Barthélémy La-Pommeraye’s ‘Richesses Ornithologiques de Midi de la France,’ of which we have already noticed the first part (‘Ibis,’ 1859, p. 201). They contain much useful information to the student of the European Avifauna.

M. Sallé has printed a carefully-prepared sale-list of his Mexican birds*, which we are sure he will willingly forward to any of our correspondents who may desire to consult it. M.

* Liste d’Oiseaux à vendre provenant des chasses faites en Amérique. Par M. A. Sallé, 13 Rue Guy de la Brosse, à Paris.

Emile Parzudaki's 'Catalogue des Trochilidés' is another printed list of the same character, which those ornithologists who are studying the group of Humming-birds would do well to apply for. M. Parzudaki has a very large series of skins of this group of birds on sale.

3. RUSSIAN AND SCANDINAVIAN PUBLICATIONS.

Herr Magnus von Wright's "Birds of Finland*," of which the title was mentioned in our January Number ('Ibis,' 1861, p. 111), forms the fifth part of the 'Bidrag till Finlands Naturkännedom, Etnografi och Statistik,' issued by the Finnish Scientific Society, and, as far as it goes,—for the part published only comprehends the Land-Birds,—will be found a very useful account of the ornithology of that country. As might be expected, the character of the Avifauna of each side of the Baltic is very much the same, and we think the author has done well in making such constant reference to Nilsson's well-known 'Skandinavisk Fauna.' But, according to Herr von Wright, *thirty-two* species occur in Sweden or Norway which have not been met with in Finland, though further observation will no doubt tend to reduce this inequality, since several birds of Asiatic origin have never been obtained in the latter country, though they must probably have passed through it to reach the other shore of the Gulf of Bothnia. Among these we may instance the two species of *Oreocincla*, *O. aurea* and *O. heinei*, Bp. (the latter erroneously called by our author *Turdus lunulatus*), *Parus cyanus*, *Emberiza aureola* and *Turtur rupicola* (Pall.), and *Columba gelastes*, Temm., the last of which may perhaps be expected some day in England. Of birds of southern or western range which do not seem to reach Finland, the more noticeable are *Falco milvus*, *F. rufus*, *Strix noctua*, *S. aluco*, and *S. flammea*, *Sylvia lusciniæ*, *S. tithys*, *S. locustella*, and *S. arundinacea*, *Motacilla boarula*, *Saxicola rubicola*, *Regulus ignicapillus*, *Emberiza miliaria*, *Picus viridis* and *P. medius*, *Alcedo ispida*, *Merops apiaster*, and *Columba livia*.

* Finlands Foglar, hufvudsakligen till deres drägter, beskrifna af Magnus von Wright. Första Afdelningen. Helsingfors, Finska Litteratursällskapets Tryckeri, 1859. 8vo, pp. 315.

The only species included by our author, which he says has not been noticed either in Sweden or Norway, is *Falco ater*; and this can scarcely be said to be a Finnish bird, though it occurs in tolerable plenty from the neighbourhood of Lake Onega northwards to Archangel.

We notice with pleasure (page 97 *et seq.*) the acknowledgment willingly rendered to the services of our countrymen, the late Mr. Wolley, and Mr. H. Dresser (the latter in company with two Finnish gentlemen), in discovering the nidification of the Waxwing (*Ampelis garrulus*, L.), of which the particulars have been given at length in this Journal.

Herr von Wright thinks himself justified in considering the Titmouse of Scandinavia, usually known as *Parus sibiricus*, distinct from the Siberian bird to which that name was applied by Gmelin, and accordingly continues to the former (the European one) Lundahl's appellation of *P. lapponicus**.

The work is written in Swedish, which is an additional recommendation, as had it been in the Finnish language it must have remained almost a sealed book to naturalists, few of whom we should imagine have time to spend in mastering the grammar of a tongue in which the *nouns have thirteen cases*!

The volume of Scientific Communications published by the Natural-History Union of Copenhagen, for the past year†, contains (page 306) a paper by Professor J. Reinhardt on the example of *Syrrhaptēs paradoxus* which was shot in Jutland, as has before been mentioned in our pages ('Ibis,' 1860, p. 109, *note*), and also (page 335) a notice of some recent additions to the ornithology of Greenland, all of which, however, are included in the valuable list of the birds of that country, with which that learned naturalist has enriched our present volume.

* Sällsk. pro F. et Fl. Fenn. Förhandl. 1848, p. 1.

† Videnskabelige Meddelelser fra den naturhistoriske Forening i Kjøbenhavn, for Aaret 1860. Udgivne af Selskabets Bestyrelse. Andet Aarties anden Aargang. Kjøbenhavn, 1861.